From: Christopher N. Deckard
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/28/02 12:40am
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

Hello,
I am concerned about the settlement between the US Department of Justice and Microsoft Corporation. After years of court battles, depositions, shuffling of paper, it seems that we are no where near a settlement which will punish Microsoft for their monopolistic behavior, and we are no where near a settlement which will protect not only the Open Source community, but closed source corporations as well.

I am particularly concerned about the fact that there is nothing in the settlement which prevents, or punishes, Microsoft in the event that they "sabotage" Windows applications to not run properly on competing operating environments. Within the next few years, there will be many applications which have the ability to run Windows software, but not on a Microsoft Windows operating system. Particularly software from the Wine project. Microsoft is known for sabotaging software to not function as intended on competing products.

Take for instance Digital Research's DR-DOS operating system. (Digital Research's successor is Caldera). Microsoft added code to beta copies of Windows 3.1 so it would display spurious and misleading error messages when run on DR-DOS. They are known for these kinds of practices, and if there is nothing in place to prevent them from doing it again, it will happen. In the case of the Wine project, this would completely put an end to any kind of functioning software which Microsoft didn't have under its monopolistic grip.

I strongly urge the US Department of Justice to take a better look at a proper settlement. One which will benefit not only the Open Source development community, but competing corportations as well. The DOJ has spent years trying to do the right thing... the DOJ should end it the right way.

Thank you,
-Chris

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